

MARCH 65

BEAR TRACK

PUBLISHED NOW AND AGAIN
MOST WIDELY READ
PUBLICATION OF ROOM C,
ESHLEMAN HALL

FEBRUARY ISSUE,
DEDICATED TO
M. F. S. E.* and—

-THE JOYS OF POWDER SKIING-



* FOR ARTICLE ON M. F. S. E., see "How I soloed El Cap"

California rock climbing has an incredibly clean safety record—considering its apparent danger and the obvious risks that climbers seem to take.

We must be using good safety procedures although they are not obtrusive. (Such a long record cannot all be luck. In the alps, climbers are killed by the hundreds each year.) In fact, simplicity itself seems to be one of our basic principles of safety.

A big problem, then, is how to train new climbers in these unobvious procedures, without miring them down in such a maze of rules that they never get past the first pitch before nightfall.

I believe the key to the California safety record is that falls are regarded as a natural part of climbing. If a first practice climb does not get a climber ready to fall and hold falls, he is not ready to do anything else.

The best training is experience with as realistic a situation as possible. The beginner needs to fall numerous times (and not just jump off the rock) before he accepts it as natural. He needs to catch numerous falls before he accepts that as natural and knows what to expect.

Surprisingly enough, the best and fastest way to practice is with falls belayed from above. With a little slack, the pulls are as strong as with a lower belay and pulley. And in actual climbing, the only belayers I've ever seen pulled out of position were belaying me from above. Actual lower belays are usually easier, because of rope friction. The only value of the pulley practice seems to me to be in illustrating the value of a good anchor (for any belay).

Rappelling is also an unnatural thing for a beginner. The scarriest situations I've seen with beginning climbers was when they tried to do a rappel of a type they had not practiced (long or overhanging). They knew how to do it, but they clutched because they'd never done it.

My main argument is the need for extensive and repeated practice of those situations—at the practice rock. One gets very little practice falling on climbs. It is impractical to have to belay rappels on a climb. And neither technique is very easy on the nerves to practice 400 feet off the ground.

That implies that a climber will start with a practice climb at which he practices belaying, falling, and rappelling, along with climbing. Other techniques can be learned on climbs with experienced climbers. But I see no excuse (excluding possible motives of lechery) for starting a beginner on a climb without that practice. Too many scary situations can develop. And too many potentially good climbers have been scared out of further interest in the sport. A scared climber is dangerous and (with some notable exceptions) probably not enjoying himself.

I think the minimum safety prescription is simple, obvious, and adequate: one practice climb including instruction and lots of practice in belaying, falling, and rappelling. I think club climbers should try to enforce that prescription by persuasion, and in signing out ropes or organizing climbing parties.

Personal judgement and a climber's shrewd evaluation of his potential climbing partners will always remain the most important factor, but I think we could stand to introduce a certain minimum of procedure.

THE TIPI

by Charlie Brown

While I was attending the Jackson Hole Folk Festival this summer in the Tetons, I ran into a rather picturesque man named Jack Langon, walking about with a camera and a small four string guitar, wearing a full beard, beaded buckskin shirt and a ranger hat with an eagle feather stuck in the band. I struck up a conversation with him and found him to be a rather well educated and intelligent man with a view of the society much like mine. He was covering the Festival for the Jasper Star-Tribune. I also learned that he lived in a tipi (not teepee) with his family, in the summer on the Arapahoe-Shoshoni Indian reservation in the Wind Rivers.

A friendship was quickly struck up, and we invited him to come up to the climbers' camp for a Teton Tea Party. He was really of our kind and a climber, and he liked very much the camp, the people, and how we lived there; so he returned the next weekend. I questioned him more on Indian life, and when he left to return to Lander, he said that he would bring up his tipi the next weekend, if I would cut 17 poles 21 to 24 feet long and strip the bark from them.

I was unable to find a heavy stand of Lodgepole pine where the trees would make beautifully thin poles, but I did find enough straight lodgepoles that I could get poles of the right length. He had told me to peel the bark out to the very tip (it's easier to peel if you leave the trees sitting in hot sun a while after lopping the branches off--close, so you won't leave holes in your cover), and to leave the poles of different lengths, as this would enhance the tipi's natural aesthetic appeal.

The next weekend, Jack, wife, two kids, and tipi arrived and we started setting the poles up. Three poles are tied together and set up as a tripod. 14 poles are placed in the crotches of the tripod in a specific pattern, and the tipi "cover", which is folded into a thin wedge, is tied at the top to the 12th pole, and is raised, with the pole, into place. The cover is then pulled around the circle of poles and is fastened together in the front with "lacing sticks", a cover for the door opening is attached, and, if high winds or freezing cold is expected or the tipi is going to be set up for some time, stakes are driven into the ground around the base, and the bottom of the cover is tied to these.

The tipi set up was a beautiful thing to behold. Jack had selected a clearing for it where the rising sun would shine on the tipi, and where we could easily see that guardian of the camp, Teewinot, raising her majestic rocky head. The cover is white, or it may be painted with a design that must come to the owner in a dream. It is tilted more steeply at the back, and its figure sweeps one gracefully up towards the sky. From the top of the cover, the fifteen poles project for several feet, their fine tips a circle that sprays outward and upward. The door faced the East, as the door of the tipi always does, for it is out of the East that the sun rises, bringing its life-giving warmth and light to the earth.

In the morning, then, the Indian rises to greet the rising sun, and speaks a prayer to Wakan-tanka (if I remember right), the Great Spirit or

Great Mystery, thanking him that he has been allowed to live to see another day. The religion of the Indian pervades all his life, as does religion in all primitive societies. It is an earthy religion, filled with bears and deer, sky and earth, sun and stars, rocks and trees, and the spirits that all these elements bear. There is a realness in the religion that I have not been able to find in the abstract philosophical dogmas of Churchianity. The Indian has a reverence to all life that goes further than the reverence of most Hiking Clubbers. When the tipi was set up, Jack produced his pipe bag, and went through the ritual of blessing the tipi and praying in Sioux and English in his "simple and humble way", passing the pipe on to us that sat about the fire with him, asking us to pray in our own way. (Jack was adopted in his youth by a Sioux Indian.) The recommended prayer, is to say "all my relations", this meaning that all Indians are your relations, and that you are praying for their well-being.

The tipi was warm inside with a warmth that was more than physical. There was a reverence to life that Jack brought from his Indian ways, that the white man seems to lack, and all of us that were there that night, and succeeding nights, felt this to be one of the outstanding experiences of the summer. There was the aroma of pine smoke, and the "Medicine Sage" and sweetgrass being burned. There was the flickering light of the fire on the cover that rose over your head to the zenith where all the poles meet, your eye being drawn there when you lie on your back, on bearskin or deerhide, by the poles rising and coming together. There is the smoke hole near the top at the front of the tipi through which you can see stars at night. Outside, the tipi is like some giant Indian lantern lit from inside with that flickering firelight, growing and waning as the fire flickers brighter or dimmer.

The tipi has been the Indians' home for centuries before the white man came and destroyed his way of life and tried to Americanize him. It used to be that anything Indian was thought to be pagan and uncivilized and must not be permitted. Now, however, as the old Indian crafts are being forgotten as the old men die, many are recognizing that something beautiful and valuable is being lost, and efforts are now being made to record in books the old Indian ways of making tipis or beaded buckskin shirts, and these are taught the young Indians in the government schools. Now when you ask an Indian how many tipis there were at the sun dance this year, he will say "More than there ever have been since the old days. I even saw a buckskin tipi at Lone Deer this year."

Tipis on the market now are made, usually, of 10 ounce duck, and sell for around \$100. It is hard to find one that is well made. If you wish to find out how to make your own, look in the University Library for a book by Reginald and Gladys Laubin, THE TIPI. In it there are patterns plus a complete telling of how the tipi was the Indians' home and how his life was lived in and centered around it. I can also give you help, information, and cheap nylon.

Tipis are perhaps the most practical of camp dwellings. They are warm in winter, cool in summer, and shelter from the weather. A 20' diameter tipi made of duck weighs (the cover) about 50 lbs., but one could be made from water repellent nylon that would weigh 10 lbs. A smaller and lighter one could easily be made. With the 20' size, there is plenty of room for a fire in the middle, and for several people to live and sleep inside, and for perhaps 50 people to pack inside for a Teton Tea Party, or some other

such ceremony. The only problem is cutting, and some times finding, poles. 17 are best for this size tipi. 15 to support the cover, and 2 more to use on the smoke flaps. They should be peeled and smooth, so that they will not wear holes in the cover. When the wind changes direction, or if you leave, or don't want a fire inside, or for some other reason, you can shift the smoke flaps or close them with these poles.

Then, pack in your 10 lb. cover, cut your poles, and camp in comfort and beauty. The Indian says there is strength in his round house, that the reason the Indian is so weak now is because he lives in the white man's four cornered house in which there is no strength. Find this strength, then, in this dwelling, and, if you really want to go Indian, build yourself a sweat lodge (instructions for this are also in the Laubins' book). Then find yourself someone who knows how to conduct a sweat, and listen to the Indian pray in the darkness and steam heat, listen to the hiss of water as it is poured from dipper to hot rocks, and immediately turns to steam, and feel the renewal of your body when you plunge into a nearby cold stream afterwards.

Do you ever wonder why the Indian stares out of his reservation with a "look of numb futility on his face"? Do you ever wonder why they live in such poverty-stricken conditions? Perhaps he is too far away from the old ways that gave him strength, and from the old times when he lived in peace with his brothers before the white man came and taught him to take scalps and fight and kill and hate. Perhaps the day will come when he can return to his old ways, and perhaps we will know how to live then too. The Indians have a prophecy about the White, Black, and Yellow men having a war, and the Red man, God's chosen people, inheriting the earth. Anyway, I find them a good, earthy, generous people, and I have enjoyed the hospitality and brotherhood they have shown me. I'm going back to the Wind Rivers this summer, where I will set up my tipi, in a camp that could make a good climbers' camp for those disillusioned with the Rangers and tourists and crowds and regulations and the creeping modernization of facilities at the climbers' camp in the Tetons, where anyone will be welcome to sit around my fire and smoke my pipe.

How I Climbed El Capitan Solo

Carol Chapman

There is a problem of great magnitude facing our society. Within the last three generations, 180 billion hours have been wasted within our country, by us, not by union featherbedding, not by big government bureaucratic waste, but by hardworking teachers and students in public and private schools. Wasted during the pursuit of knowledge. The knowledge in question? The spelling of the English language.

English non-phonetic (or phony) spelling, an outdated and useless element of what is otherwise one of the simplest languages, is the source of more wasted hours than are union strikes. Why then, is this problem ignored?

Change the textbooks? Revamp the entire English language? Force millions of Americans to re-learn to read? In spite of the fact that this would stimulate the economy by providing more opportunities for business investment, soak up unused savings, etc., and probably set us on the road

to fantastic prosperity, no, this is not the way. I am not advocating a complete transformation that would make the most liberal shudder, I am merely speaking for a natural, step-by-step, conscious evolution similar to the slower evolution of pronunciation that already is taking place. For a while it will be necessary to teach children both old and new spelling, just as German students are taught old and new script. The change for adults, minor as it is, will be relatively easy, and is indeed already accepted in such literary works as "Little Abner".

The way is not thru legislative decree, not by formal petition to the school board, but by individual resolution. In your daily letters, notes, and papers, make changes in the words which now have the most ludicrous spelling, such as "although", "night", "rough", and "busy". This, incidentally, does not mean an abandonment of all unsounded letters. (For instance, the "e" in "nite" has the function of indicating a long "i".) It only means relinquishing purely decorative letters, which stand in the way of, not aid, correct pronunciation.

In conclusion, I urge every supporter of a rational spelling system to support the M.F.S.E.....Movement for the Phonetic Spelling of English.

BAY AREA LAMENT

by John Fitz

Another of the organizations committed to the preservation of natural values is the Save San Francisco Bay Association, Box 925, Berkeley 1, California. In recent years the cities surrounding the Bay have been "reclaiming" land for residential, industrial and highway use by filling in portions of the Bay adjoining them. The cities have used the shoreline as refuse dumps, as have the millions of motorists who do not seem to care about the attractiveness of their cities or the Bay. Existing plans would swallow up, or fill up, more than half of the remaining Bay, reducing it to a sewage slough in the middle of a gigantic metropolis without room to move or air to breathe—drowned in smog and garbage. The Save San Francisco Bay Association is working hard to prevent this unbelievable disaster to the environment we live in here.

The Bay functions as a natural thermostat for the Bay Area Cities; it functions as a priceless source of recreational values; properly maintained and protected it could be a perfect transportation system, for people and wastes. Reduction in its area, reduction in fresh water in the river above the Bay, the continued increase of partially treated wastes will soon destroy all of these values, upon which literally no price can be put. All further filling of the Bay should be stopped immediately; the shoreline from Fremont to Crockett, from Vallejo to Sausalito, from San Francisco to San Jose should be stripped of industrial plants and converted into parks. The various agencies, sanitary districts, transit, tidelands control, airports, drainage, and reclamation, fish and game, must be unified into one overall Bay Authority, for coordination of use and preservation of its matchless values. Refuse should be used in sanitary landfill or composted; burning should stop; and sewage should be piped outside the Golden Gate, five or ten miles if need be. Can we really exist if the Bay becomes a shallow stinking ditch? Who would want to? Yet this is where the present plans are

leading us.

Assemblyman Edwin L. Z'berg of Sacramento and State Senator J. Eugene McAteer are introducing bills in the present session of the State Legislature to freeze all activity now, and prepare criteria which must be met for further Bay development. Their proposals, summarized in a report available from Senator McAteer, would establish an overall Bay Area Commission, and require permits for all interim work to be done on the Bay, until such criteria are prepared. The basis for granting of permits is laid down as either immediately necessary to the public welfare, or of such a nature as not to interfere with the present Bay. Please write your assemblyman and State Senators about this (and about the Redwoods if you haven't done so). I give another list of local representatives in our State Legislature.

STATE SENATORS

Joseph A. Rattigan, Dist. 12, P-0- Box 817, Santa Rosa
John F. McCarthy (R), Dist. 13, P-0- Box 870, San Rafael
J. Eugene McAteer (D), 22045 State Building, San Francisco
Luther E. Gibson (D), Dist. 15, 500 Maryland Street, Vallejo
John W. Holmdahl (D), Dist. 16, 1111 Jackson Street, Oakland
George Miller, Jr. (D), Dist. 17, P-0- Box 909, Martinez
Clark L. Bradley (R), 1st National Bank Building, San Jose

ASSEMBLYMEN

Dist. 7, William T. Bagley (R), 205 Albert Building, San Rafael
Dist. 11, John T. Knox (D), 207 37th Street, Richmond
Dist. 13, Carlos Bee (D), 1065 "A" Street, Room 216, Hayward
Dist. 14 Robert W. Crown (D), 1111 Jackson Street, Room 7018, Oakland
Dist. 15, N. C. Petris (D), Suite 809, Finan. Ctr. Bldg, 405 14th st, Oakland
Dist. 16, Don Mulford (R), 2150 Franklin Street, Oakland
Dist. 17, W. Byron Rumford (D), 1500 Stuart Street, Berkeley
Dist. 18, Willie L. Brown, Jr. (D), 1524 Masonic Ave. San Francisco
Dist. 19, Charles W. Meyers (D), State Building, San Francisco
Dist. 20, John L. Burton (D), 903 Pine Street, San Francisco
Dist. 21, Milton Marks (R), 235 Montgomery Street, San Francisco
Dist. 23, John Francis Foran (D), 311 California Street, San Francisco
Dist. 24, Alfred E. Alquist (D), 777 North First Street, San Jose
Dist. 25, William F. Stanton (D), 510 N. 3rd Street, San Jose
Dist. 27, Leo J. Ryan (D), 308 Linden Avenue, South San Francisco

Last spring I wrote this song, which I call the Bay Area Lament, or John Fitz's nightmare, my plaintive cry against the ruthless and inconsiderate, blind and stupid mesh of decay which seems to be gripping our country and the Bay Area. I used to wonder why we sing so many protest songs, but what else can be do but sing when things are so bad?

(To the tune of Sweet Betsy From Pike)

There was a fair region out westward they say,
Till the planners came along and they filled up the Bay,
And old tires by the score and old scrap by the ton
Littered the beach and that land was undone.

ies, the Bay it was clean and the fish they did jump,
Till the cities began all their sewage to dump,
Now the bottom is black with the muck of the lands,
And the Bay shrinks away while industry expands.

Chorus: Singing, Too-ra-li, too-ra-li, too-ra-li-ay!

Oh, the cities were green and the houses were proud
Till the freeways ran wild to follow the crowd,
They tore down old mansions to pave all the ground,
So that millions of big cars could go round and round.

Yes, the cities were green and the houses were glad,
Till the realtors said, These old houses are bad,
We can't make enough money, let's tear them all down,
And build expensive apartments all over the town. (Chorus)

The lupines and poppies, they bloomed on the hills,
But they've disappeared with the cuts and the fills,
And billboards invaded like a gangrenous hand
To blot out what scenery was left in the land.

Once both builder and owner took pride in a home,
And inside and outside were built like a poem,
But subdivisions have won, they are spread like a blight
And houses with antlers are everywhere in sight. (Chorus)

The breezes and mists they would dance and would fly,
And the stars shone like diamonds all over the sky,
But the stars are all gone, they are hidden from sight,
By millions of lights blinking throughout the night.

The breezes and mists they would freshen the air,
But no pleasant smells are left anywhere,
Diesel fumes and smokestacks, now blacken the skies,
And clouds of yellow smog bring the tears to our eyes. (Chorus)

We're gluttoned with stuff to buy and to choose,
And automobiles, we've too many to use,
So we pile the wrecks high, making mountains of steel,
Soon the earth will be covered with junk automobiles.

The woods are all littered with empty beer cans
The ravines are all filled up with junk that was man's,
Wherever you wander, wherever you pass,
The green earth's all covered with paper and glass. (Chorus)

So there once was a Bay with a clean sandy shore,
But all of that beauty will never be no more;
There were beautiful cities with quiet dark streets,
But the rampage of Progress destroys what it meets.

I'd rather see mushrooms grow in the grass,
And barnacles cover up a ship's hull at last,
Than see stifling apartments beyond our control,
And the roaring of freeways taking peace from my soul. (Chorus)

Come young lads and young lasses and hear what I say,
We may still have time to rescue the day,
And save the Bay and the towns and the hills
From the billboards and freeways and Bay-snatching fills.

Come young lads and young lasses and listen to me,
Let's save our fair land for posterity,
And don't just sit by while destruction and greed
Take away all the air, sky, trees, and water that we need.

Chorus: (ritard) Singin' too-ra-li, too-ra-li, too-ra-li-ay!

(Last minute flash: letters should be written to Colonel Robert H. Allen, US Corps of Army Engineers, 100 McAllister Street, San Francisco, protesting the granting of a permit to construct a fill which would reach two-thirds of the way from the Oakland mole to Treasure Island.)

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BEAR TRACK PUBLISHED BY UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA HIKING CLUB

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EDITOR'S NOTE: If anyone is dissatisfied because only a few people write articles for the Bear Track, then write your articles and get them in as soon as possible.

Everyone should come to the discussion about the Southwest Water Plan

Monday, March 15, 3 78
290 Hearst Mining Building
Speaker: Floyd S. Denny, Commissioner of Reclamation

Cleaner Cleaner